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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 04/06/07

- 1) Top headlines
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US ties:

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- 5) LDP lawmakers to lobby against US congressional resolution over comfort women
- 6) Defense Minister Kyuma to ask US to provide F-22 stealth fighter data for FX selection

Fallout from Aegis data leakage:

- 7) Police likely to quiz MSDF lieutenant commander today over Aegis data leaks
- 8) Classified info contained in Aegis data taken out
- 9) Aegis data shared by MSDF echelon, used for in-house briefings

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- 11) Prime Minister Abe to launch expert panel to study collective security
- 12) Campaigning for Diet by-elections kick off in Okinawa, Fukushima
- 13) Tokyo Gov. Ishihara still ahead of all other candidates in gubernatorial race
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Economic topics:

- 15) Japan's business leader urges FTA with US
- 16) Japan, China experts to meet on East China Sea gas field project

Articles:

1) TOP HEADLINES

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Revised domestic violence prevention law to protect victims from intimidation

Mainichi:

Civil code over 300-day birth registration by divorced women to be revised

Yomiuri:

Companies received 1,207 unreasonable demands last year

Nihon Keizai:

Government aims for 70% of young, married women in workforce in 10 years

Sankei:

Police authorities to interview MSDF lieutenant commander as early as today on suspicion of Aegis data leakage

Tokyo Shimbun:

Kumamoto City gives hospital "baby hatch" OK

Akahata:

Severe judgment should be given to political parties that decided

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substantial increase in residential taxes

2) EDITORIALS

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- (2) Tsunami came to Solomon earlier than warning

Mainichi:

- (1) Dismantling of Takamatsuzuka tomb: Repair and preservation needed so that we will not regret later
- (2) Seibu Lions scandal: Amateur players also responsible

Yomiuri:

- (1) Poll on Constitution: Drive to revise top law must stay on course
- (2) Aegis system intelligence: MSDF must not spill the beans

Nihon Keizai:

- (1) Lessons from DaimlerChrysler
- (2) Take advantage of change in diplomatic environment in Middle East

Sankei:

- (1) Another North Korean abduction of Japanese nationals: Abduction issue has yet to be resolved
- (2) Seibu Lions' shady fund: Professional baseball leagues must clear up their own houses

Tokyo Shimbun:

- (1) Expansion of baseball backdoor money scandal: Amateur players must make clean start
- (2) Concealing of nuclear plant accidents: Need for perfect safety measures

Akahata:

Final stage of campaigning for unified local elections: JCP protects people's lives and livelihoods

3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, April 5

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)
April 6, 2007

10:00

Handed official notifications appointing former Mitsubishi Corporation Vice President Hidetoshi Kamezaki, former Mitsui Ferry President Seiji Nakamura members of the Bank of Japan Policy Board.

10:27

Met with actress Noriko Sakai and table tennis player Ai Fukuhara, who serve as goodwill ambassador for the Japan-China cultural and sports exchange year. Nippon Keidanren Chairman Mitarai, chairman of the implementation committee of the exchange year, was present.

10:55

Met with State Minister for Innovation Takaichi and Toyota Motors Chairman Katsuaki Watanabe, chairman of the experts research council of the IT Strategic Headquarters IT New Reform Strategy Appraisal.

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11:25

Met with former Prime Minister Nakasone, chairman of the Parliamentarians' League to enact a new constitution.

14:30

Met with former US Ambassador to Japan Baker.

15:10

Met with State Minister for Economic and Fiscal Policy Ota.

16:15

Met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Matoba, followed by Cabinet Intelligence Director Mitani.

17:01

Security Council meeting. Then met with Foreign Minister Aso. Then IT Strategic Headquarters meeting.

19:10

Returned to the official residence.

4) Abe, Baker agree to strengthen cooperation on North Korea issue

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)
April 6, 2007

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe received a courtesy call from former US Ambassador to Japan Howard Baker yesterday at the Prime Minister's Official Residence. Baker expressed his gratitude for Japan having decided to extend the Iraq Special Measures Law for two years. He also said, "The United States is interested in possible progress" on the relationship between Japan and China. Abe then responded: "Building up concrete bilateral cooperation in a broad range of areas, we will expand common strategic reciprocal relations."

Abe and Baker shared the view the Japan and the US would strengthen bilateral cooperation in dealing with the North Korea issue and cooperate in resolving the abduction issue.

5) LDP lawmakers to lobby against a US house "comfort women" resolution

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
April 6, 2007

The Parliamentary League to Consider Japan's Future and History Education (chaired by former Education Minister Nariaki Nakayama), a group of lawmakers in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), decided to send some members of the league, including Yasuhide Nakayama, chair of the league's subcommittee, to the United States before the US House of Representatives takes a vote on a resolution calling on Prime Minister Abe to apologize for former comfort women.

The purpose of their US visit is to work on congressional members not to vote for the resolution.

The parliamentary league has been actively calling for a review of the so-called Kono statement (a government statement issued in 1993 by then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono). In order to avoid affecting Prime Minister's planned tour of the US starting on April 26, members of the league are expected to travel to the US after the prime minister's visit.

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6) Kyuma to seek information on F-22 for determining next mainstay fighter

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
April 6, 2007

Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma decided yesterday to ask during the Japan-US defense ministerial talks to be held in Washington on April 30 for information on the F-22 Raptor, a new US stealth fighter jet, as a candidate to become Japan's next-generation mainstay fighter jet. Japan has not been able to obtain information on the F-22 because its exports are prohibited under US law. The defense minister intends to ask the US to relax its law to provide Japan with information on the F-22, a promising candidate.

According to the Mid-Term Defense Buildup Program (FY2005-2009), the Air Self-Defense Force is to procure seven aircraft as the follow-on model of the F-4 fighter. The Defense Ministry plans to determine the new model by next summer. Besides the F-22, Japan is studying six other models as candidates including the Eurofighter that was jointly developed by four European countries and the F-35 stealth fighter now under joint development by the United States, Britain and other countries.

For determining the winner, the Defense Agency needs information on: (1) operational conditions, (2) detailed capabilities and characteristics, and (3) a logistical support system involving military personnel and the maker. Japan has received replies about three of the six models and has completed field surveys. Surveys have not been conducted on the remaining three models that include a model under development. Although the United States is expected to lift the ban eventually on exporting F-22s, the defense minister has decided to refer to the model because information on it is not available at present due to US legal constraints.

7) Police to question MSDF lt. cdr who drafted Aegis data that leaked out

SANKEI (Top play) (Excerpts)
April 6, 2007

Police authorities, including the Kanagawa Prefectural Police, have decided to question as early as today a Maritime Self-Defense Force lt. commander who is believed to have drafted highly confidential data on the Aegis system that have found their way to a 33-year-old male MSDF petty officer 2nd class under the command of Escort Flotilla 1, who took the information out of the office. Police authorities believe that MSDF personnel, including the petty officer 2nd class, accidentally leaked the data in the process of copying private files. Accidentally leaking data on the Aegis system that are classified as special defense secret (tokubetsu bouei himitsu) is subject to punishment. For this reason, they have recognized the need to closely question the lt. commander about the process from how the data was compiled to how they were leaked out.

Undergoing the questioning is a lt. commander in his forties who was responsible for the management and maintenance of the Aegis system. According to investigators, the file containing the secret information bore his name as the creator. The prefectural police have found out that he is an incumbent lt. commander working at an SDF facility in Tokyo.

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The leaked information falls under the category of special defense secret in the Secret Protection Law under the Japan-US Mutual

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Defense Assistance Agreement specifying how confidential SDF information must be handled. According to the law, such acts as illicitly detecting, collecting, and leaking information by persons handling such information in the line of duty could face up to 10 years in prison.

According to the prefectural police, the lt. commander belonged to the Program Operational Unit responsible for the management and maintenance of pivotal data on the Aegis system from September 1997 through March 2000. When the system was shifted in March 1998, he was sent to the US Navy that developed and manufactured the Aegis system to acquire the necessary operational knowledge.

According to the MSDF and other sources, the lt. commander after returning from the United States was assigned to a post responsible for explaining the new system to MSDF maintenance personnel. Police believe that 800 pages of data that leaked out had been compiled at that time as a briefing material.

8) MSDF intelligence leak: Data include special defense secrets

ASAHI (Page 38) (Full)
April 6, 2007

An investigation by the Kanagawa Prefectural Police into a case in which a petty officer 2nd class, 33, who is a crewman assigned to the destroyer Shirane under the command of Escort Flotilla 1 based in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, and who took home secret information on an Aegis ship, found that the leaked information was data compiled by the program development department as presentation materials and that the files contained special defense secrets of more than 10 pages.

According to investigative authorities, the petty officer 2nd class bought the external hard disk, which contained the information, three years ago. Regarding the route through which he obtained the information, the petty officer said that he obtained it from his colleague. As reasons for obtaining such information, he said that he wanted to keep the information at hand, as he was interested in military intelligence on destroyers.

According to the prefectural police, this colleague in his thirties is not a crewmember of the Shirane. He is not in a position to access information on Aegis ships. He has reportedly refused to provide information in voluntary questioning, saying, "I have not handed such information to anybody."

For this reason, the investigative authorities are cautiously investigating the case, because the confession by the petty officer has many ambiguous points.

9) Senior officer creates Aegis files as explanatory materials for MSDF senior officials around 1998

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
April 6, 2007

A Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) petty officer second class, 33, who is a crewman of the destroyer Shirane based at the port of

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Yokosuka in Kanagawa Prefecture, has now been found to have taken home a floppy disk containing data on records about destroyers and Aegis vessels. The Defense Ministry classifies such data as confidential. According to the Kanagawa prefectural police

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yesterday, the data in question was created as explanatory materials about the renewed Aegis system for MSDF senior officials.

The materials reportedly were created around 1998 by an MSDF lieutenant commander. The materials are believed to contain highly confidential information, such as the core part of the Aegis system,

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which is classified as "special defense secrets (tokubetsu boei himitsu).

In lectures on the operation of the Aegis system, such explanatory materials, handled as predesignated secret, are distributed to senior officials and are collected after the lecture.

In police questioning, the lieutenant commander reportedly said that he and the petty officer had no connections at work and that he had received the data in exchanging information with his colleague. But his explanations have changed again and again. In addition, the Aegis data was not found in that colleague's personal computer. The prefectural police and the MSDF Shore Police Command are investigating the route of the intelligence leak.

10) Abe to strengthen "Japan-US alliance" ahead of his visit to US by establishing expert panel by end of month to discuss propriety of use of right to collective self-defense

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Excerpts)
April 6, 2007

Nakahiro Iwata

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe yesterday decided to launch by the end of the month a panel of experts aimed at studying cases relating to the use of the right to collective self-defense. The United States is anticipating Japan will authorize the exercise of the right to collective self-defense as part of its efforts to strengthen the Japan-US security alliance. The Abe administration also plans to introduce today in the Diet a bill revising the Security Council Establishment Law aimed at setting a Japanese-style national security council (NSC) modeled after the US. Ahead of his planned visit to the US late this month, Abe is hurriedly paving the way for Japan to work in much closer cooperation with the US.

Abe has emphasized the need to study the right to collective self-defense: "We need to rebuild a legal basis for security that will meet the needs of the times in order to further contribute to the peace and stability of the world." In essence, his notion comes to strengthen the Japan-US alliance.

The right to collective self-defense is a right to fight back against an enemy if an ally comes under attack from that enemy. Japan is not allowed at present to exercise that right. So, if Japan is attacked by a foreign country, the US will defend Japan, but Japan cannot take part in any counterattack if the US is attacked by another country. Abe's idea is to change this sort of "unilateral" alliance to a "bilateral" one binding on both sides.

Former Deputy Secretary of State Armitage and other US officials have also contended: "Japan's ban on the use of the right to

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collective self-defense has shackled the Japan-US alliance." Pro-Japanese Americans' expectations of Abe allowing the exercise of that right also have served as encouragement for him to move to do so.

But the question of allowing the use of the right to collective self-defense involves a review of the current interpretation of the Constitution and will be certain to split public opinion. Presumably for this reason, Abe has until now promoted discussions of the question in a "quiet manner," but he has now decided ahead of his planned US visit to make his idea crystal clear and translate it into action.

By announcing that idea, Abe also aims to make it a campaign issue in this July's Upper House election. It has long been under taboo to make the Constitution and security affairs campaign issues, but Abe is apparently going to demonstrate his imprint without avoiding

subjects that could split public opinion in two.

11) Government to set up panel to review collective defense, focusing on use of police authority

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
April 6, 2007

The government has decided to set up an expert panel by the end of this month to discuss four scenarios in connection with exercising the right to collective self-defense under the current Constitution, with the aim of reaching a conclusion as quickly as possible. Prime Minister Abe, before coming into office, insisted on studying the issue. The government also hopes to underscore its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Japan-US Security Treaty ahead of the prime minister's planned first visit to the United States starting on April 26.

The four scenarios under which Japan would be allowed to exercise the right to collective defense are: (1) Japan intercepts ballistic missiles heading toward the US under the missile defense (MD) system; (2) the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) fights back when a naval vessel navigating along with a Maritime Self-Defense Force warship is attacked on international waters; (3) SDF troops rush over and counterattack if troops from another country are attacked in a joint operation with a common purpose, like reconstruction assistance in Iraq; and (4) SDF personnel use weapons to remove obstructions to the execution of their duties in United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKO).

On the first scenario, US Ambassador Thomas Schieffer urged Japan's quick response in a press conference last October.

The government cites as the ground for allowing intercepting a missile "the use of police authority" to "protect the safety of the people from a dangerous projectile flying above Japan." "Protecting Japan from enemies" falls under the category of exercising the right to individual self-defense, so Japan is not allowed to intercept a missile passing over Japan, because it is unknown where it is heading. The panel is expected to discuss if "police authority" can be invoked to shoot down a missile that is apparently heading toward the US.

In the course of discussing counteractions on international waters or during Iraq reconstruction aid operations, the government has so

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far interpreted that the use of weapons in the case of SDF troops being free of risk might be deemed as the exercise of collective defense and infringe on the Constitution. Even so, there is the view that in a case where a counterattack by an attacked country is recognized as legitimate self-defense and is not designated as "the state of war," SDF troops' use of weapons should be interpreted as the use of minor self-defense, and not as the use of collective defense. In the Iraq Reconstruction Assistance Special Measures Law, SDF members are allowed to use weapons to protect those under the control of these SDF members, even if they do not take joint action. An expansion of this scope is also likely to be discussed.

12) Three new-face candidates run in Upper House by-election in Okinawa and Fukushima

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
April 6, 2007

As of 5:00 p.m. yesterday, the deadline for entry into the now-announced House of Councillors by-elections in Okinawa and Fukushima prefectures, three candidates have filed their candidacies for each by-election. The voting will take place on April 22.

The by-election in Okinawa will be a race among three new-face candidates backed by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the LDP's junior coalition partner New Komeito, supported by four opposition parties, Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the People's New Party, or backed by no parties. The by-election

in Fukushima will be contested by three new-face candidates: one backed by the LDP, another on Minshuto's ticket, and the remaining one on the JCP's ticket. In the two races, the ruling and opposition camps will rock horns. In Okinawa, the candidates -- Yoshimasa Karimata and Aiko Shimajiri who have set up their own political organizations -- are backed by political parties.

The two elections will take place to fill Upper House seats that fell vacant after two Upper House members ran in the gubernatorial elections last November. All the more because the outcome of the two races will affect the setting of the lower threshold for victory in this summer's Upper House election, political parties intend to make all-out efforts for the two Upper House by-elections.

13) Tokyo gubernatorial race: Ishihara still lead other candidates

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
April 6, 2007

The Mainichi Shimbun conducted a telephone-based poll of voters in Tokyo on April 4-5 and also interviewed voters to probe public views on the Tokyo gubernatorial election as campaigning entered the final stage. Like the results of the previous survey on March 31 and April 1, incumbent Gov. Shintaro Ishihara, 74, has an edge on all other candidates. However, former Miyagi Gov. Shiro Asano, 59, has slightly boosted his support rate. Of the respondents, 77%, up four points from the previous poll, said that they would definitely go to the voting, which will take place on April 8. The figures showed the growing public interest in the race.

14) Poll: 46% in favor of constitutional revision

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Abridged)

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April 6, 2007

A total of 46% favor revising Japan's postwar constitution, while 39% do not, the Yomiuri Shimbun found from its recent face-to-face nationwide public opinion survey conducted March 17-18. Those for constitutional revision outnumbered those against it for the 15th straight year. However, the proportion of pro-revision respondents dropped 9 percentage points from last year's survey. It declined for the third year in a row. Meanwhile, the proportion of anti-revision respondents increased 7 points from last year.

15) JCCI President Nobuo Yamaguchi urges quick progress of Japan-US FTA talks

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 9) (Full)
April 9, 2007

Commenting on a possible impact of the conclusion of the US-South Korea free trade agreement (FTA) talks, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) President Nobuo Yamaguchi during a press conference yesterday noted, "Japan will be slightly disadvantaged in trade with the US. Industry circles want the government to promptly promote FTA talks, including talks with the US." He thus called for an early conclusion of a Japan-US FTA.

He then said: "FTAs will have a major impact on Japanese agriculture. However, looking to 20-30 years ahead, it will not be good to continue the current protective policy based on high tariffs. It will be in the interests of Japan to make a plan quickly and implement countermeasures."

Kakutaro Kitashiro, director of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Keizai Doyukai), has also expressed concern about the US-South Korea FTA, "It will have an impact on Japan's export-oriented industry, such as the electric and auto industries."

Touching on the issue of reforming the public servant system, Yamaguchi insisted, "Amakudari (literally "descent from heaven" or government bureaucrats' post-retirement practice of moving into public corporations or private businesses) that leads to influence

peddling must be eliminated, but competent human resources must be used. I am concerned that rushing to reform the system may have an adverse effect on Japan."

16) Japan-US expert meeting on gas field development

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)
April 6, 2007

Tokyo and Beijing will hold a technical experts meeting in Beijing starting this afternoon to discuss joint development of natural gas fields in the East China Sea. Shin Hosaka, director of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Division of the Natural Resources and Energy Agency, and others will take part in the meeting from the Japanese side. Participants will pursue boiling-down talks with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to Japan scheduled close at hand for Apr. 11.

SCHIEFFER